IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior listings.

1. (Currently amended) A signalling ~~apparatus~~ node for processing signalling messages, comprising:

~~a signalling point;~~

(a) links via which the signalling [[point]] node is connected to ~~at least a second signaling apparatus~~ other signalling nodes;

(b) at least one signalling system ~~within said signalling point~~ that sends signalling messages to ~~the second signal apparatus~~ other signalling nodes or, respectively, receives signalling messages from ~~the second signalling apparatus~~ said other signalling nodes via said links;

characterized by

(c) ~~wherein~~ said signalling system respectively allocates a signalling network identity to ~~said links; and~~ a link;

(d) at least one ~~of said links is returned in a loop from the signalling point to the signalling point as a loop link~~ link that is not connected to other signalling nodes but formed as a loop, what is referred to as a loop link,

~~wherein~~ whereby different signalling network identities are allocated to the loop link at an output and input side by the signalling system~~; and~~

~~wherein said loop link comprises at least one of a network tunnel and a signalling tunnel~~.

2. (Currently amended) A signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 1, wherein said signalling system, with assistance of said loop link communicates signalling messages between at least two signalling systems contained in the signalling point.

3. (Currently amended) A signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 1, wherein said signalling system generates internal load for test purposes with assistance of said loop link.

4. (Currently amended) A signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 1, wherein said signalling system realizes an interworking communication with other networks with assistance of said loop link.

5. (Currently amended) A signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 1, wherein said signaling system is a signalling system according to No. 7 and allocates a same network identifier to said loop link at the output and input side.

6. (Currently amended) A method for signalling in a signalling ~~apparatus~~, node comprising the steps of:

allocating signalling network identities to links of a signalling ~~apparatus~~ node by a signalling system;

allocating different signalling network identities at an output side and input side to a link as a loop link that is returned from the signalling ~~apparatus~~ node to the same signalling ~~apparatus~~ node in a loop.

7. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

employing said loop link by said signalling system to communicate signalling messages between two further signalling systems of the signalling ~~apparatus~~ node having a respective interface.

8. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of:

employing said loop link by said signalling system to generate load for test purposes.

9. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of employing said loop link by said signalling to enable with other networks.

10. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

allocating a common NI to said loop link at an output and input side by said signalling system.

11. (Currently amended) A signaling ~~apparatus~~ node for processing signaling messages, comprising:

links via which the signaling ~~apparatus~~ node is connected to other signaling ~~apparatus~~ nodes;

at least one signaling system that either sends signaling messages to the other signal ~~apparatus~~ nodes or receives signaling messages from the other signaling ~~apparatus~~ nodes via said links;

wherein said signaling system allocates a signaling network identity to at least one of said links; and

wherein said signaling system allocates different signaling network identities to a loop link at an output side and input side for one of said links when said one of said links is returned in a loop to a signaling[[point]] node;

~~wherein said loop link comprises at least one of a network tunnel and a signaling tunnel~~.

12. (Currently amended) A signaling ~~apparatus~~ node, comprising:

at least one signaling ~~point~~ node;

a first internal network comprising a first unique network identity and a first ISUP;

a second internal network comprising a second unique network identity and a second ISUP;

a first signaling link associated with said first internal network;

a second signaling link associated with said second internal network;

at least one routing table configured with at least one of said first unique network identity and said second unique network identity; and

a loop link interconnecting said first internal network and said second internal network ~~to form at least one of a network tunnel and a signaling tunnel~~.

13. (Currently amended) A method for signaling in a signaling ~~apparatus~~ node, comprising the steps of:

allocating unique point codes to each of a plurality of signaling networks interconnecting a plurality of signaling ~~points~~ nodes; and

routing a signal from a first network of said plurality of signaling networks to a second network of said plurality of signaling networks using said unique point codes ~~using at least one of a network tunnel and a signaling tunnel~~.

14. (Currently amended) The signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 12, wherein a signalling system communicates signalling messages via said loop link between two signalling systems contained within the signalling ~~apparatus~~ node.

15. (Currently amended) The signalling apparatus according to claim 12, wherein a signalling system generates internal load for test purposes with assistance of said loop link.

16. (Currently amended) The signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 12, wherein a signalling system realizes an interworking communication with other networks with assistance of said loop link.

17. (Currently amended) The signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 12, wherein a signaling system is a signalling system according to Signaling System 7 and allocates a same network identifier to said loop link at the output and input side.

18. (Currently amended) The signalling ~~apparatus~~ node according to claim 1, further comprising at least a second signalling system within said signaling [[point]] node.